Step by step, peace and order were restored in the corps. In explaining the events to the Cossacks, I made it clear, without reservations, that the expedition had been the result of a conspiracy. "Let the Investigating Committee decide who is to blame. You, the Cossacks, have done your duty by stopping the operation. You, the officers, became victims of this mess, but you cannot blame your men for what happened to you."

With the aid of regimental committees, I gradually succeeded in restoring the authority of the command. Meanwhile, Krasnov was regrouping the echelons, consolidating them in regular formations. By the middle of October the work was completed. The Third Cavalry Corps was again a fighting unit.

DISINTEGRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT

It was more difficult to restore the soldiers' confidence in their officers in other units of the army. Soldiers made no distinction between Kerensky and Kornilov, between their immediate commanders and generals playing politics in Mogilev. To them, all officers were members of the same gang. Deadly poison had been injected into the troops. At first it worked slowly, but gradually the infection penetrated deeper and deeper, into the blood, brains, and heart of the army. And again, as in 1916, the disintegration of the state authority was coming from above, from the Winter Palace.

Kerensky, who had disappeared from the scene during the crisis, remained President of the Government and added to this title that of the Supreme Commander, convinced that his name would inspire confidence and devotion in both the officers and enlisted men. Actually, however, he was one of the most hated men in the army. The effect on the army of his self-appointment to the post of the Supreme Commander was perhaps worse than that of Kornilov's mutiny. With good reason or not, soldiers considered Kerensky a partner in Kornilov's conspiracy. Now that the conspiracy had been frustrated by the All-Russian Executive Committee, one of the conspirators had succeeded the other as Supreme Commander!

My office in Pskov occupied the ground floor of a large building, a former high school. At the back were a few rooms that could be used as living quarters. Emma and I took one room for ourselves, another was occupied by the chief of the office, the third was converted into a field-telegraph office, with direct wires to the armies, Petrograd, and Mogilev. I had inherited from Stankevich a staff designed mainly to record information on events at the front. My assistants were nice lads, but none of them could step into a crowd of rioting soldiers